

# Background and Planning Evaluation

## Background and Site Context

The proposed development is located in the southwest community of Medicine Hill south of the Trans-Canada Highway, east of Canada Olympic Park and is accessed via Na'a Drive SW to the south. The subject site is approximately 1.34 hectares in size, measuring approximately 170 metres wide by 80 metres deep and is currently undeveloped.

Surrounding development is mainly characterized by a mix of developing multi-residential, commercial, and mixed-use areas. In the area east of Canada Olympic Park there are three development areas at the base of the slope divided by ravines. To the west of the subject site is the Gateway District and to the east is the Commercial District. Both of those districts are primarily comprised of commercial and mixed-use developments. The subject site is within the Village District located between the Gateway and Commercial Districts and is intended to accommodate neighbourhood development that includes a mix of grade-oriented multi-residential forms. Across Na'a Drive SW to the south is another development site and then further south is the Paskapoo Slopes, which is culturally significant to the First Nations and contains a number of archeological sites. The applicant has provided a Context Site Plan, *Figure 1* shown below, that indicates the location of the site in relation to the other areas described.

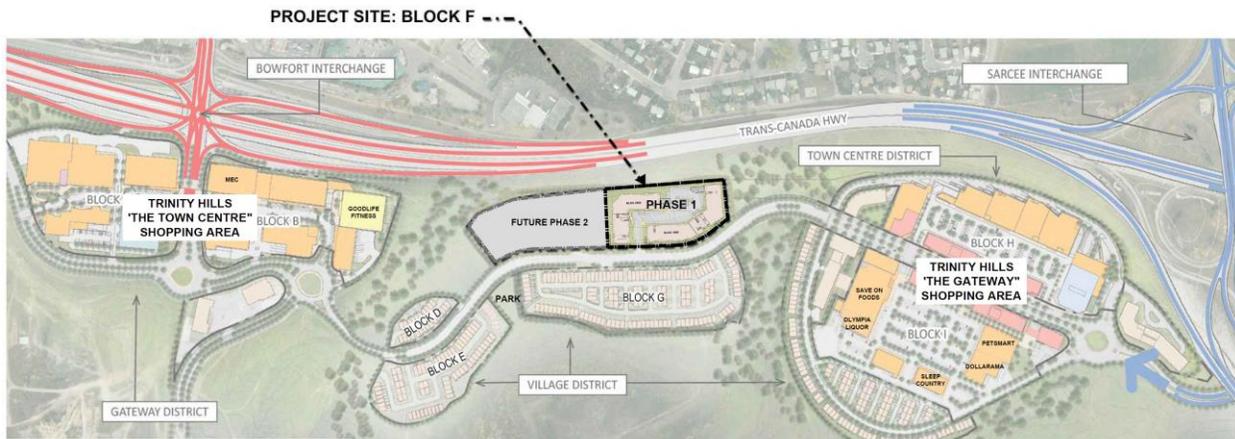
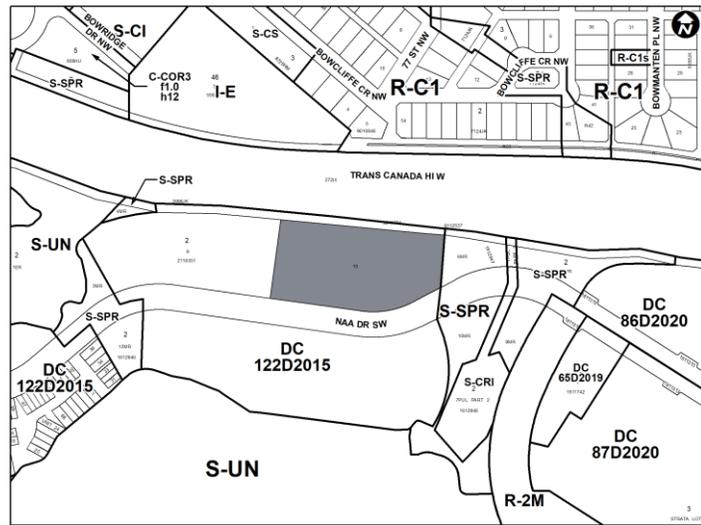
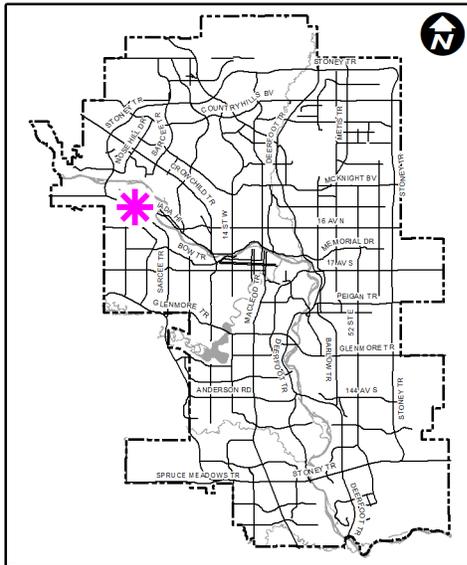


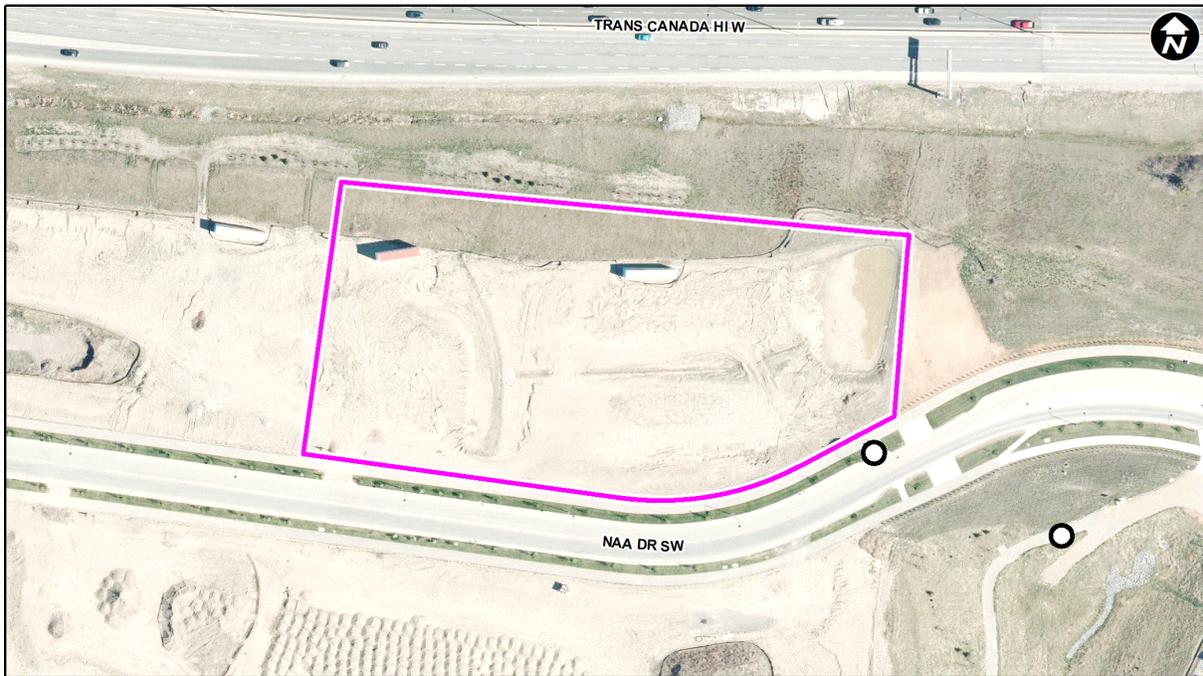
Figure 1: Context Site Plan

## Community Peak Population Table

As of the 2019 City of Calgary Civic Census, there is no population data for the subject area as this is a new residential area.

# Location Maps





## Previous Council Direction

None.

## Planning Evaluation

### Land Use

The subject site is designated as a DC District (Bylaw [122D2015](#)) which was approved by Council on 2015 July 27. The DC District references the base district of Multi-Residential – Medium Profile Support Commercial (M-X2) District and limits the height of multi-residential buildings to 21 metres with no limits on floor area ratio.

### Development and Site Design

This application proposes two multi-residential, mid-rise buildings. Though a limited range of support commercial uses are allowed in the DC District, the proposal does not include any due to the proximity of commercial and mixed-use areas to the west and east. Key aspects of the development are described below.

### Site and Building Design

The two proposed residential buildings are six storeys in height (up to 18.5 metres) and comprised of 340 dwelling units. The western building is L-shaped and the eastern building is C-shaped, and are placed on the site in a manner that allows for the largest number of at-grade units to be oriented onto Na'a Drive to achieve the policy intent in the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands ASP*. Both buildings have two main floor elevations that adjust to the slope of the site. Combined, the buildings would contain 96 one-bedroom units, 196 two-bedroom units and 48 three-bedroom units. This provides a diverse range of housing options within the multi-residential form.

The building materials include a combination of primarily fibre cement panels, stucco and stone veneer. The colour palette used for the development includes white, dark greys, beige, and brown, with a colour scheme that articulates the façade and emphasizes building features such as the primary building entrance. While the buildings are relatively large, the massing of the buildings is broken up through façade articulation, space between the two buildings, and variations in roof elevation. The longer building length is interrupted by a deeply recessed, stepped-back portion which is intended to break down the mass and reduce the impression of length. The effect at street-level will provide visual interest and activation, as described below.

### ***Public Realm and Outdoor Amenity Spaces***

To enhance and activate the public realm, individual at-grade unit entrances with direct connections to the public sidewalk are provided along Na'a Drive SW. These entrances will allow some of the building's users to enter and exit at multiple points along the street. Design of the at-grade interface has been challenging due to the significant, multi-directional slope and width of the site. The proposed design keeps the grade difference between the public sidewalk and the individual unit entrances facing Na'a Drive SW to under one metre. Private outdoor amenity space is also provided for at-grade units which will serve to activate Na'a Drive SW and provide a connection to the public realm. The main building entrances and vehicular entrance are located at the north side of the site.

Common amenity areas for the residents would be provided indoors in a fitness room and outdoors in an at-grade central amenity space. The central amenity space is located between the two buildings and has direct connections to the building entrances. The proposed eastern building also includes a large rooftop amenity space that includes a pergola, seating, barbecues, and fire tables. Private amenity areas are also provided for individual residential units, having either at-grade patios or balconies. In addition, the Paskapoo Slopes and Canada Olympic Park are nearby and provide regional-level amenity for residents.

### ***Landscaping***

Public and private landscaping has been proposed in a way that will soften the edges of the site and provide visual interest at the interior of the site using greenery and public amenities. Most street trees along Na'a Drive SW are proposed to be retained as only two need to be removed to accommodate the vehicular entrance. To the south along Na'a Drive SW, trees, shrubs, natural stone retaining walls, and short fences are proposed on the edge of the site to complement the street trees. To the east and west there are natural public greenspaces (ravines) adjacent to the site in addition to the landscaping proposed on-site. Facing the Trans-Canada Highway, the site design proposes short retaining walls and trees. There are also trees planted in between the site and the highway on public lands, creating a gradual transition to site development. Overall, the proposed landscaping elements complement the built form and contribute positively to site design.

### ***Historical Significance***

The land has significant archeological history as the Paskapoo Slopes are known to contain First Nations artefacts of Blackfoot origin. There is a former buffalo kill site of Provincial significance in the vicinity, one of the largest in the Calgary area.

### ***Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP)***

The applicant presented the proposed development permit to UDRP on 2021 May 19 and then again on September 15 during the development permit review stage. The UDRP endorsed the proposal and provided comments which suggested improvements to the central amenity area, further articulation of the building (particularly to those portions visible from the Trans-Canada

Highway), rear entry conditions, and landscaping. The UDRP comments are included in Attachment 5. Administration worked with the applicant to revise the development permit drawings in response to both UDRP and City Wide Urban Design comments. The applicant made changes to the proposed development, including increased articulation of the building, particularly those portions visible from the Trans-Canada Highway. Other changes were made to the central amenity area to make pedestrian connections more direct to the building entrances and parking on the edges was reduced.

### **Transportation**

The Medicine Hill community is accessed via the Bowfort Road interchange off the Trans-Canada Highway to the west of the site and from Sarcee Trail SW to the east of the site. Direct vehicular access to the subject site is available at the southwest portion of the site with a driveway connection to Na'a Drive SW. Parking is provided at-grade as well as below grade in a connected parkade located under the buildings. Access to the parkade is located on the north side of the site with an access from both buildings. A total of 425 residential parking stalls have been provided on-site.

Transit service is provided along Na'a Drive SW, with an existing bus stop (Route 408 – Valley Ridge) located approximately 200 metres (three-minute walk) to the west, with a future stop located at the east side of the site adjacent to Building 1000-A. Pedestrian connectivity is provided along an existing multi-use pathway along Na'a Drive SW. Direct pedestrian connection to the sidewalk is provided from both buildings, as well as sidewalks along the site driveway that connect to internal pedestrian walkways within the site.

A total of 175 Class 1 and 34 Class 2 bicycle parking stalls have been provided on site. Class 1 stalls are provided within the parkade, while the Class 2 bicycle storage has been provided at-grade in groups adjacent to primary building entrances. The multi-use pathway along Na'a Drive SW provides cyclist access to adjacent uses within the Medicine Hill area, as well as connectivity to the greater pathway network to the north via the Bowfort Road interchange.

### **Environmental Site Considerations**

There are no environmental concerns to note.

### **Utilities and Servicing**

Public water, sanitary, and storm sewer mains exist in the adjacent public rights-of-way and have sufficient capacity to support this development.

## **Legislation and Policy**

### **South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)**

The recommendation by Administration in this report has considered, and is aligned with, the policy direction of the [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan](#) which directs population growth in the region to cities and towns, and promotes the efficient use of land.

### **Interim Growth Plan (2018)**

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's [Interim Growth Plan](#) (IGP). The proposed development builds on the principles of the IGP by promoting efficient use of land and regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

### **Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)**

Map 1: Urban Structure of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP) identifies the subject site as being within the Developing Residential Area, and is referenced as Planned Greenfield Community with Area Structure Plan. The MDP supports the development of complete and diverse neighbourhoods which provide a range of housing choices including a mix of built forms and ownership tenures. The mix of housing types can include single detached, duplexes, rowhouses, attached housing, accessory dwelling units and secondary suites, medium and higher density, and mixed-use residential developments. This application proposes a medium-density housing type, which aligns with the intent of the MDP.

### **Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)**

Administration has reviewed this application in relation to the objectives of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#) programs and actions. The applicant has proposed the installation of four electric-vehicle parking stalls for visitors in line with the actions set out in Program 4: Electric and Low-Emissions Vehicles. A surplus of five indoor secure bike storage stalls is also included in the design.

### **Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan (Statutory 2005)**

The [Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan](#) (ASP) describes the importance of developing the area north of the Paskapoo Slopes in a thoughtful manner due to the natural and historic significance of the area. The subject site is located in the Village District, a residential area, centred between the more commercially-focused Gateway and Town Centre Districts and is an important connection to support the development of this area.

The ASP requires that buildings in the Village District be designed to enhance the public realm with ground-floor residential and commercial units along the Residential Main Street providing individual, direct entryways to the sidewalk. Due to the significant slope challenges across the width of the site, the proposal meets the policy with entrances to the ground floor units are located within one metre of elevation from the adjacent public sidewalk. The edges of the site are also well-landscaped and naturalize the public realm.

The composition and density of the proposed development aligns with the ASP. The proposed development is exclusively multi-residential with associated amenities. Density is regulated on a wider basis beyond the subject site. There is a combined density maximum for all of the Village District of 1,664 units (ASP Section 8.4). The 340 units proposed by this application is well short of the maximum allowed for the area and will allow other areas to develop to their full potential.

The proposed development is supported by ASP policy.

### **Improving Calgary's Entranceways: A Guide for Development Adjacent to Entranceways (Non-Statutory 2012)**

Entranceways are major thoroughfares that serve as important transportation connections into Calgary. These roads carry higher volumes of traffic and accommodate development that is highly visible to motorists. As such, it is necessary to ensure that this development is visually attractive and creates an appropriate public image. Facades should incorporate architectural details that add visual interest and reduce the appearance of the building mass and scale. Long monotonous facades should be avoided. Rooflines for large buildings should be broken up and varied by providing change in the height of a portion of the roof, change in form, or other articulations.

The proposed design meets the intent of these policies by articulating the building façade and varying the roof elevation. The configuration of the two buildings also breaks up the mass of development facing the highway. The slope of the site and the proposed landscaping obscures the visibility of the surface parking area. The proposed development meets the intent of the Entranceways policy.

**Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 and DC District (Bylaw 122D2015)**

Administration highlights the following relaxations to the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 in the table below. Administration has reviewed each relaxation individually and considers each relaxation to be acceptable for the reasons outlined in the table below.

<b>Bylaw Relaxations</b>		
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Provided</b>
556 Low Water Landscaping Option	(d) a maximum of 30.0% of the required landscaped area is planted with sod and the remainder is covered with plantings, mulch or hard surfaces;	Plans indicate 50.13% (+20.13%) or 2477.40m <sup>2</sup> (+994.86m <sup>2</sup> ) of sodded area.  <i>Administration supports this as a relaxation since this north-facing site with six-storey buildings will be shady and that makes landscaping a challenge.</i>
	(e) a minimum of 30.0% of required trees are selected from the list in Table (below): Low Water Trees.	Plans indicate 28 (-5) low water trees provided.  <i>Same rationale for a relaxation as above.</i>
558 Parking	(1)(a)(i) 1.25 stalls per unit for units greater than 60m <sup>2</sup> (1)(a)(ii) 1.0 stalls per unit for units less than 60m <sup>2</sup>	Plans indicate 425 (-44) stalls.  <i>Administration supports this as a relaxation as the amount of parking provided is considered sufficient for the 340 proposed units (the overall parking rate is 1.25 stalls per unit).</i>
<b>Direct Control 122D2015 Bylaw Discrepancies</b>		
None Noted		